

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Sept. 14, 2012

**CONTACT:** Jeff Mammenga, Media Coordinator, (605) 773-6000,  
Jeff.Mammenga@state.sd.us

### **Civil War discussion series coming to Cultural Heritage Center**

PIERRE, S.D. -- "Making Sense of the American Civil War," a series of three scholar-led discussions, will be held at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre on Oct. 11 and 20, and Nov. 4.

At each session, the conversation will focus on a different facet of the Civil War experience, using one or more common texts as the foundation for the discussion. Discussion leaders will be Brad Tennant, associate professor of history at Presentation College in Aberdeen, and Donovin Sprague, a professor at Black Hills State University in Spearfish.

"Back east it was the Civil War -- out here on the Northern Plains it was a whole different situation," Tennant said. "I think it's often overlooked."

Books to be discussed are "March" by Geraldine Brooks, "Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam" by James McPherson, and "America's War: Talking About the Civil War and Emancipation on Their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries," edited by Edward L. Ayers. Also included will be a booklet of readings compiled by Tennant and Sprague focusing on events that occurred in Dakota Territory and the surrounding region during the Civil War period.

Readers may sign out and borrow the books from the Cultural Heritage Center. The books are available in the Administration Office from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. CST on weekdays, and at the front desk on weekends.

Here are summaries of each session:

- Thursday, Oct. 11, 7 p.m. -- the discussion will center on the booklet of readings focusing on the Civil War period on the Northern Plains. Both Tennant and Sprague will serve as discussion leaders.
- Saturday, Oct. 20, 10:30 a.m. -- the second discussion will be on Ayers' "America's War," especially sections 2 and 5, with Tennant as discussion leader.
- Sunday, Nov. 4, 2 p.m. -- Tennant will lead the discussion of "March" and "Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam."

For more information on the series at the Cultural Heritage Center, please call (605) 773-6011.

The series is presented by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association's Public Programs Office and coordinated through the

efforts the South Dakota Humanities Council in collaboration with the South Dakota State Library.

-30-

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council, and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*

*The South Dakota Humanities Council is a non-profit organization founded in 1972 whose sole mission is to deliver humanities programming to the people of South Dakota. As a steward of the state's heritage, the council promotes the appreciation of South Dakota history, literature and other related humanities subjects through grant-making and cultural programs, such as the Festival of Books, the One Book South Dakota program and others. The council's core mission is to support and promote the exchange of ideas to foster a thoughtful and engaged society. More about the South Dakota Humanities Council is online at [www.sdhumanities.org](http://www.sdhumanities.org).*